

Holford news & views



February 2025

The editorial team

Mo Plomgren, Mike Pearce, Mike and Gae Richardson and Emma Cavendish

Editorial



Well, we've certainly had an awful lot of weather to start 2025. I can't remember a winter as wet as this one in the nearly 20 years since we moved to Holford. Too wet to do much in the garden although I must confess to being a fine weather gardener and always reluctant to get working in the cold and damp. Saddening to see how many trees have been felled on the way beyond Alfoxton Park but

heartening to see the first snowdrops and hellebores poking through the muddy ground.

I do hope that you will join the throngs of people taking up a new hobby or interest in 2025. The Village Hall has a number of events each week and we have learned from recent research that exercise is a key way to ward off physical and mental decline. Remember "it's never too late to be who you want to be" (George Eliot). Well, I for one hope that's true but last week's session with a Personal Trainer at the gym did give me cause to re-think my ambitions!!!



As always in a new year we look back at the way things have gone and those sadly who have left us forever. Kind friends and neighbours who will be sorely missed.

We were very sorry to hear that Kilve Village Stores and Post Office is to close shortly and we carry a report from Matt, Charlotte, Ysabel, Georgia, Baxter & Doris inside. All of Holford residents remember the marvellous way the family rallied round during Covid lockdowns and made sure everyone had their shopping delivered to the village hall so no-one was left without supplies. We are going to miss this great local asset but sadly it seems to be the way things are going for small, local shops. Our sincere thanks to the family for their past efforts and we wish them well for their future endeavours.

Emma

Here's hoping you are having a happy New Year!

*Holford News and Views will also be on the Holford Village website
www.holfordvillage.com our thanks to David Talling.*

The Last Ever Kilve Stores Newsletter

It's with great sadness that we inform you that Kilve Stores will be closing its doors permanently.

Sunday 2nd February 2025 will be our last day of trading.

We have been warning locals for some time now to **'use it or lose it'**. It doesn't seem to matter what we say or do, it never really makes much difference, that age old saying **'You can lead a villager to the shop, but you can't make them come in and spend money'**

We had an independent viability report carried out in October 2024 to make sure we were making the right decision and clarify why the shop was failing. The report concluded that

*"The continued decline of both the local village store and post office is widespread nationwide, with the typical comment as with many of the rural shops, **'we ran out of money. I don't take any wages; we are just paying the bills of the moment'**. That could be said here. and its nonviability is found proven."*

We wish we could turn the clock back to when Kilve Stores was a thriving community asset and queuing to be served was expected every morning and we knew the names of most people who lived in the village and surrounding areas.

We've tried our best to raise awareness and drum up more support; we honestly don't think we can do any more. We must now think about ourselves and our family. We cannot keep running at a loss throughout the winter months.

It's so sad that a such an amazing and rare village asset, a shop and post office, is **GONE!**

On a personal note, I grew up in East Quantoxhead, and went to school in Williton and Minehead. My dad used to bring me and my brother down to Kilve Stores when Mr Barker owned and operated the shop.

I believe Kilve Stores & Post Office has been trading since the mid 1960's, a very long time.

I've known this shop all my life, it was an honour to buy it 17 years ago and a privilege to run it and serve my community, I honestly never thought it would end this way. I thought we would sell it to another family who would continue to run it for many, many years to come.

I am devastated to be the one to close it!

We would like to whole heartedly thank you for your kindness, support and friendship over the years. We are going to miss working in the shop and miss seeing and chatting to our customers each week.

Best wishes,

Matt, Charlotte, Ysabel, Georgia, Baxter & Doris



Holford Gardeners Group News

Now the nights are drawing out by one minute at least,
I would like to draw your attention to
Holford Flower Show 2025 schedule of classes.

We have incorporated something for everyone, to get stuck
into during the winter months, Sculpture, Fascinators, Year of
the Snake, Clothing Transformation, oh and not to forget the fella's out there
"Made in the Shed"!!

So blitz the winter blues, try something new, and unlock your creative side, have
some good ole fashioned fun, take part, enjoy.

More on Flowers and Vegetable show winners next month.

The schedule of new classes and entry form can be viewed and downloaded from
the Holford village Website <https://www.holfordvillage.com/hgg.html>, or picked
up from our monthly events,
at Holford Hall.

For more information or to collect schedule and entry form please contact Liz
07879 906592

Best Wishes HGG

Below one of the amazing entries in 2024

Horse sculpture by Nicky Harris



Really useful videos on how to prune your
roses – thanks to David Austin Roses

[How to prune an English climbing rose](#)

[How to prune an English shrub rose](#)

A decorative border of red hearts of various sizes surrounds the text.

*“Be my Valentine”
Supper Quiz*

**7PM
SATURDAY 15TH
FEBRUARY 2025**

**HOLFORD & DISTRICT
VILLAGE HALL**

*Tickets £12.50 - includes a
‘Soup & Ploughman’s Supper’*

**Teams 2 - 6 BYOB
For tickets phone: 07801 496725
or Email: lou.russ@btinternet.com**

In aid of hall funds

Editors Note :

Sadly we have no Village Hall News and no Parish Council reports to publish this edition. We are particularly concerned that the Parish Council is not engaging with our newsletter as we believe it is an excellent way to showcase the workings of our own local democracy. Our deadlines are the middle of the month prior to publication and in the past the PC meetings occurred at about this time and we have extended the deadline to give the PC time to submit reports. Hopefully this will happen again in the future. Lottery results were also not available for publication this edition.

Alfoxton Park 2025 Programme



Dear Friends,

We're excited about our beautiful 2025 Programme: eight months of retreats, workshops and events exploring **the magical space where the Buddha's teachings meet the Arts and Nature.**

We want to reach out to new people, and while we may not have a lot of money for ads we are incredibly rich in friendships and community support. Please share this link with your friends on Facebook or in your WhatsApp group.

"There's a new retreat centre I know that brings together meditation, the arts, and connection with nature. It's in a stunning deer park in Somerset, with ancient trees and a house that Wordsworth once called home. The programme this year looks great, everything from concerts and workshops to longer retreats. Plus, it is 'Dana' based (meaning 'generosity'), so you pay what you would enjoy. Here's the link: <https://www.alfoxtonpark.org.uk/retreats>."



Home-Start West Somerset is looking for home visiting volunteers.

If you can spare some time to help out, it would be greatly appreciated, even just a few hours can make a big difference.

[Please get in touch if you'd like to know more.](#)

What do Home-Start volunteers do?

Home-Start volunteers aim to build the confidence and independence of the family by:

- ❖ offering support, friendship and practical help
- ❖ committing to a minimum of 2-3 hours per week home-visiting according to the family's needs
- ❖ visiting the families in their own homes, where the dignity and identity of each individual can be respected and protected
- ❖ reassuring families that difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual
- ❖ emphasising the positive aspects of family life
- ❖ developing a relationship with the family in which time can be shared and an understanding developed, providing a regular, reliable presence in that family
- ❖ drawing on their own experience of parenting to encourage parents' strengths and emotional well-being for the ultimate benefit of their own children
- ❖ encouraging families to widen their network of relationships and to use effectively the support and services available in the community

Millenium Quiz

1. Which film star died during the shooting of the Ridley Scott movie Gladiator?
2. In which film did Mel Gibson play a character called Rocky Rhodes?
3. Which Tory candidate for mayor of London had his £10,000 Rolex watch stolen in 2000?
4. Who 'handbagged' Tony Blair in June 2000 by slow handclapping as he gave a speech?
5. What is the name of the footbridge across the River Thames opened in June 2000 which was closed just days later because it wobbled?
6. Which 18-year-old was photographed in December 2000 cleaning toilets in South America?
7. Which TV presenter and former wife of Bob Geldof was found dead in her Notting Hill home in September 2000?
8. What nickname was given to Eric Moussambani, the worst swimmer to compete in the 2000 Olympics?
9. Who in February 2000 took over from Jennie Page as the boss of the troubled Millennium Dome?
10. In 2000 it was suggested that which TV pub should change its name to the Boozy Newt?
11. Which shop had its Royal Warrant removed in February?
12. Who became the first ever boxer to be knighted in March?
13. Remembered for saying the police "had had a bloody good hiding" in the Broadwater Farm riots. Name the controversial MP who died in April aged 56
14. Which sporting duo picked up OBE's in May, 19 years after being awarded MBE's?
15. In July 58 asylum-seekers from which country, were found suffocated to death inside a freight container at Dover?
16. Who became the world's most expensive footballer when he moved from Barcelona to Real Madrid, in August, for £40 million?
17. David Keanu Ronan Best became the latest edition to which TV family in October?
18. 3,000 people were evacuated from which city in November after the swollen waters of the river Ouse reached its highest level since 1625?
19. Detectives foiled "the world's biggest robbery" when they stopped a daring raid on £350 million worth of diamonds on show where?
20. Model number 5,202,412, the last ever, rolled off the production line at Halewood. What was it?

Thanks to Mike Richardson – answers on page 10

Richardsons' Ramblings

Back in September we had a week of wall-to-wall sunshine when staying in Dorset and were glad of a breeze to keep cool – a first without rain and cold! This time we visited some places new to us and importantly dog friendly, spending a whole day at the popular Sculpture by The Lakes. Although we were there at a reasonable hour The Kitchen was already heavily booked for lunch so took an early slot, and it was certainly worth it – note to self to book ahead in future. No time for coffee with lunch at noon so had an initial wander round The Sculpture Park, followed in the afternoon by a leisurely stroll on meandering paths, along riverbanks and over bridges.



Sculpture by The Lakes is 26 acres alongside the River Frome, with Dorchester being the nearest town. The Gudgeons moved there in 2007 and immediately began transforming the former fishing lakes into what is now one of UK's loveliest sculpture parks. There is now a great collection of over 1,000 trees and shrubs, with many of them under threat in the wild. Renowned sculptor Simon Gudgeon and 20 other sculptors are responsible for the 120 sculptures, either life size or much larger, that fit in perfectly with their surroundings, creating a very tranquil scene.



The Park was accessible for all with seating dotted around and not once did it feel busy. It was lovely to just sit and drink in the peaceful atmosphere, unless you near a sculptured windchime but that just added to the tranquillity. One group of ladies had obviously had a nice lunch, possibly in one of the private luxury venues hired for the day and were dipping their toes in the river – would have preferred not to have seen one older lady's thong as she settled herself down!

When we first saw this amazing cheetah our Airedale, Ella was very suspicious and would not go anywhere near it. When we went back to it, she very gingerly approached and sniffed it, but didn't stay still long enough for a photo shot!



The trials and tribulations of selling a property!! Everyone loves the house and garden – I thought nearly an acre would put people off. That we have been surprised by the feedback would be an understatement and I am sure we have had some 'townies' viewing! One was surprised we had an oil tank – obviously did not read the information first – our agent pointed out that rural properties will be on oil or LPG. Our cottage is nearly 200 years old, and two couples expected modern staircases. Anyone who knows our place will know we only have one neighbour, apart from the cows at times, across the lane from us BUT that's a 'no' for the latest two viewings – one wanting the middle of nowhere and no surprises has been looking for over a year. The estate agent is as baffled as us! Rant over!!

Gae



2024 Christmas Card Collection

The delivery service had a significant increase in numbers, to a record of 567 cards collected and delivered. We believe that this is comfortably the highest number of cards that we have delivered. Fortunately, Erl and Mo, plus Gae and Mike were particularly helpful with the deliveries.

A cheque for £165 was sent to the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance. This was gratefully acknowledged as each call out costs approximately £3,500.

Sadly our donations have declined most years from £216 in 2020, to £165 this last year.

Many thanks for supporting this service,

Sue & Keith



St Mary's Church – Holford

Christmas at St. Mary's was quite an event! Carol singing on Saturday 21st December was great and the church looked lovely. Many thanks to the flower ladies for all their hard work. The crib service led by Sally on 24th was a complete sell-out! Very much enjoyed by everyone with lots of children and our canine friends! There was a communion service on Christmas Day for those who liked a quiet visit to church.

The tiles on the roof which have blown off during the recent storms have been repaired and we hope the weather will now behave. It is hoped that the water tap can be moved to a more suitable spot, so that nobody has to trudge through a bog to get to it. Watch this space!

You may have noticed that the services have been altered and we now only have three per month. This is mainly because we have fewer clergy and Eleanor, although a Superwoman in her own right is physically unable to cover a service in all nine churches every week. Please see the list on the notice board for our timetable.

Sue Ayshford



Millenium Quiz answers

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Oliver Reed | 11. Harrods |
| 2. Chicken Run | 12. Sir Henry Cooper |
| 3. Steve Norris | 13. Bernie Grant |
| 4. The Women's Institute | 14. Jane Torvill & Christopher Dean |
| 5. The Millennium Bridge | 15. China |
| 6. Prince William | 16. Luis Figo |
| 7. Paula Yates | 17. The Royle Family |
| 8. Eric The Eel | 18. York |
| 9. Pierre-Yves Gerbeau | 19. Millennium Dome |
| 10. The Rovers Return | 20. The last Ford Escort |

Wild once more: pine martens return to the South West of England after 100-year absence

15 pine martens including 8 adult females and 7 adult males were released at secret locations on Dartmoor during September in what



conservationists are hailing as an historic step in the restoration of the region's woodlands and their wildlife.

The return of pine martens is the work of the Two Moors Pine Marten Project and comes after two years of meticulous planning and consultation with local communities.

The project is being led by the charity Devon Wildlife Trust and is a partnership between seven conservation organisations: Dartmoor National Park Authority, Devon Wildlife Trust, Exmoor National Park Authority, Forestry England, National Trust, Somerset Wildlife Trust and Woodland Trust. It has been made possible with the support of The National Lottery Heritage Fund. The release of pine martens into Dartmoor was the first phase in the project's plans to establish a resident population of the cat-sized, tree-climbing members of the weasel family. Pine martens went extinct in the South West of England more than 100 years ago after centuries of loss to their favoured woodland living places, and as the result of hunting and trapping. The project's second phase will see a similar release of the animals in Exmoor during 2025.

Dartmoor's new Pine Martens have been sourced from healthy wild populations in Scotland using the expert assistance of The Vincent Wildlife Trust. In a carefully planned operation, under licenses from Natural England and NatureScot, the animals were health checked by vets before being driven to their new homes in Devon. Arriving under the cover of darkness each animal was placed in its own specially constructed pen at woodland locations which were chosen for their seclusion. There they were fed and watered by a team of local volunteers. After three days of quiet acclimatisation, the pen doors were opened, and the pine martens were allowed to make their first historic steps into the wild.

More info at [Wild once more: Pine Martens return to the South West of England after 100-year absence | Somerset Wildlife Trust](#)



Thai style roast quail

A lovely sticky marinade for roast small birds. You can use poussin cut in half or even chicken joints but need to check they are thoroughly cooked through*

Ingredients for 2

4 Quail

Marinade

3 tbsp sake or dry Sherry
 2 tbsp Oyster sauce
 1 tbsp Japanese soy sauce (Tamari)
 1 tbsp sesame oil
 ½ tsp of five spice powder
 ¼ tsp of caster sugar
 1 tsp sweet chilli sauce (or more if you like it hot)

Flavourings

4 spring onions chopped
 3 garlic cloves chopped
 1 thumb sized piece of ginger peeled and grated

Put the birds in a plastic bag. Whisk the marinade ingredients together and pour into the bag. Leave in a cool place for at least 4 hours or preferably overnight. Squidge the bag occasionally so that the marinade reaches all of the flesh.

Pre-heat the oven to 220° / 200° Fan.

Line a roasting tin with a double sized sheet of foil (to save washing up!) and put the birds into the centre on top of the flavouring ingredients. Pour the marinade over and make a parcel with the foil. Cook in the oven for 30 minutes – 40 minutes. (Depending on the size of your pieces they may take longer).

After 20 minutes in the oven unwrap the parcel and baste the birds with the marinade. Leave the foil open after basting to get a good shiny coating on the birds. Check that the birds are cooked by inserting a skewer into the thickest part. The juices should run clear*.

Serve with a crisp Asian style salad and some rice.

***TIPS :** Important to check that the pieces are cooked if they are larger.

invites you to a talk on

Thomas Spigurnell - 1633-1663

**“A Somerset
Scoundrel”**

attorney-money lender-surveyor- gentleman farmer

by

Adrian Webb



2pm to 4 pm – Monday 24th February – Kilve Village Hall
Refreshments will be served

The Public Garden**Robert Lowell**

Burnished, burned-out, still burning as the year
you lead me to our stamping ground.
The city and its cruising cars surround
the Public Garden. All's alive—
the children crowding home from school at five,
punting a football in the bricky air,
the sailors and their pick-ups under trees
with Latin labels. And the jaded flock
of swanboats paddles to its dock.
The park is drying.
Dead leaves thicken to a ball
inside the basin of a fountain, where
the heads of four stone lions stare
and suck on empty faucets. Night
deepens. From the arched bridge, we see
the shedding park-bound mallards, how they keep
circling and diving in the lanternlight,
searching for something hidden in the muck.
And now the moon, earth's friend, that cared so much
for us, and cared so little, comes again—
always a stranger! As we walk,
it lies like chalk
over the waters. Everything's aground.
Remember summer? Bubbles filled
the fountain, and we splashed. We drowned
in Eden, while Jehovah's grass-green lyre
was rustling all about us in the leaves
that gurgled by us, turning upside down...
The fountain's failing waters flash around
the garden. Nothing catches fire.

If you would like to hear this read by Billy Connolly it is available on
UTube

[Poetry: "The Public Garden" by Robert Lowell \(read by Sir William
"Billy" Connolly\)](#)



Holford Community Speedwatch

During December it was virtually impossible to run sessions due to the weather, a combination of rain, we are not allowed to operate in wet weather, and it being too cold to stand on the side of the road. Standing water on the A39 on the Nether Stowey direction makes braking hard dangerous and so again our sessions are restricted. The problem is that some of the drains on the West side of the road are blocked and so water does not drain away despite gullies being cleared.

On a positive note we now have fewer speeders as the majority of drivers take notice of our roadside teams and the SIDs are having a positive effect. On a negative note between the hours of 08:00 and 21:00 in the period Dec 17 and January 17 2025 we recorded 139 vehicles passing our SID with an average speed of over 60mph. The maximum speed recorded by our SID was 90mph.

Holford Road Safety Group

The SIDs continue to work well as so far, even in dull and wet weather, the batteries and electronic mechanism operate as expected. Monthly readings are taken from both SIDs and we are at the point where we can extract information from the data to provide the police with specific information to help their enforcement team.

The condition of road signs between Kilve and Nether Stowey gives rise to concern as many are damaged or too dirty to be clearly visible. As most of these are mandatory speed signs drivers are unlikely to be prosecuted if detected. We often welcome Avon & Somerset Police enforcement do visit the village on a regular basis with their speed cameras.



This is the face you see when you are telling someone all about last night's dream and they are just thinking "what is for dinner?"

Oil delivery Scheme

Time to stock up again?
For those wishing to make use of the community oil delivery scheme, orders will need to be placed by Monday for deliveries in the following week, usually on Wednesday

Please put these order dates on your calendar

Mondays Feb 10th, March 3rd and 24th, April 28th and May 26th

But you can contact David at any time :

David Young on 741249
davidyoung1934@talktalk.net



Lottery
The Lottery is up and running again!

Winners
December **No winners**
January **available**

Refuse collections :
Wheely bins every **three** weeks on Fridays.
Collections a day later after Bank Holidays.

Recycling collections every Friday.
Collections a day later after Bank Holidays

Holford and District Village Hall

What's On? – Dates for your Diary



For full details see the
Holford and District Village Hall website
www.HolfordVillageHall.org

Bookings : Emily Hecksher T : 741694
or on line at www.HolfordVillageHall.org

VARIOUS REGULAR EVENTS PLANNED

FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION DO CHECK THE VILLAGE HALL WEBSITE

Mon	2 nd Monday in the Month U3a Genealogy	2pm
	Yoga	6pm
	3 rd Monday of each month iPad sessions with Alan Falkingham	Booking required
	Short Mat Bowls – Kilve Village Hall	7.00pm
Tue	Meditation Pilates – note : 3 rd Tuesday of the month is Gardeners' Group	12.00 -1.00 5pm and 6pm
Wed	Kundalini Yoga	6.30pm – 8pm
	Every other Wed U3a Wellbeing	
Thu	Table Tennis	7.30 – 9pm
Fri	Art Group Craft Group	10.00 – 1 pm 1.00 – 4pm
Sat	Monthly Coffee Morning First Saturday in the month	

We hope you have enjoyed this edition

If anyone has any articles, ideas, news, snippets etc please do let us have them.

before the deadline March 15th

Please send items for the next issue to
EmmaCavendish01@aol.com

Publication date April 1st

Please don't send images and text directly from your phone

these are very time consuming to edit.
Save your photos to a jpeg file. Emma